



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
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Greetings,

The Massachusetts population is increasingly becoming more diverse – a mosaic of cultures, languages, and ethnicities. The Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Office of Health Equity is committed to promoting the health and well being of racial, ethnic and linguistic minority populations throughout the Commonwealth. To achieve this goal, we are pleased to present a new and creative tool that will assist in the elimination of health disparities: ***Making CLAS Happen: Six Areas for Action*** is a guide designed for health and human service agencies to help enhance our ability to meet the needs of our diverse communities.

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services-Office of Minority Health issued CLAS (Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services) Standards in 2000, recognizing that culturally appropriate services have a positive impact on the health of culturally diverse populations. The standards offer a framework to address the structural, clinical, and organizational barriers that contribute to health disparities.

Making CLAS Happen offers innovative and practical approaches for agencies to incorporate the federal CLAS principles and practices into all aspects of organizational activities. Some of the benefits of implementing these standards include improvement in clients' health and satisfaction, reduction in costs, increase in agency marketability for grants and contracts, and greater confidence in the staff's ability to perform their duties.

Training on the CLAS Standards is available on our website as an additional resource to help implement the recommendations from the manual. The training modules can be found at www.mass.gov/dph.

We hope that ***Making CLAS Happen*** is a helpful tool to you and other agencies that are striving to achieve health equity and integrate CLAS Standards in a meaningful way.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John Auerbach".

John Auerbach, Commissioner
Massachusetts Department of Public Health

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Georgia Simpson May".

Georgia Simpson May, Director
Office of Health Equity